

# NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

November 2006

The first American Indian Day was celebrated in May 1916 in New York. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a joint congressional resolution designating November 1990 as "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations have been issued every year since 1994.

*U.S. Census Bureau*



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## Did you know?

As of July 1, 2005, the estimated population of American Indians and Alaska Natives, including those of more than one race, was 4.5 million. They made up 1.5 percent of the total population.

The American Indian and Alaska native population in California was 696,600 as of July 1, 2005, the highest total of any state in the nation. California was followed by Oklahoma (401,100) and Arizona (334,700). About 36,500 American Indians and Alaska Natives were added to Arizona's population between April 1, 2000, and July 1, 2005. That is the largest numeric increase of any state in the nation.

*U.S. Census Bureau*

## NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE: REMEMBRANCE, RENEWAL By Geary Hobson

Remembering, continuance, renewal. Native Americans have been accustomed to recounting their histories and their ways of life through intricate time-proven processes of storytelling. It is only during recent decades that scholars have identified these ways of storytelling as "oral tradition." For millennia, Native Americans carried on their traditions in that fashion. Never more than a generation from extinction, as Momaday has written, it is all the more to be cherished by the people because of that tenuous link. In remembering, there has been strength and continuance and renewal throughout the generations.

In the words of Acoma Pueblo poet Simon J. Ortiz, "Indians are everywhere." ... Native Americans are writing about themselves and their people. Their writings are based on firm ground, nurtured by strong roots, and are growing indomitable flowers.

*U.S. Society and Values / Feb 2000*

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*Hopi woman weaving a basket.  
Photographed by Henry Peabody,  
ca. 1900. (NARA)*

# VIDEOTAPES

## **106 Series: Native Americans**

*3 parts, each 23 minutes, produced in 1996*

This series provides a unique look into the colorful day-to-day life and customs of diverse Native American cultures.

## **135-8 Geronimo and the Apache Resistance**

*60 minutes, produced in 1989*

Award-winning PBS documentary tells the story of Geronimo and how he led his band of followers to resist federal authority for more than 25 years.

## **135-9 Indians, Outlaws, and Angie Debo**

*60 minutes, produced in 1988*

Award-winning PBS documentary chronicles the story of Oklahoma historian, Angie Debo, and her heroic life and efforts in getting the true story of the Oklahoma Native Americans told.

## **145-4 A Weave in Time: The Story of a Navajo Family 1938-1986**

*60:38 minutes, produced in 1987*

This award-winning documentary chronicles the evolution of a Navajo family from 1938 to the present day.

## **145-5 Live and Remember**

*28:41 minutes, produced in 1987*

This program focuses on the Dakota Sioux tribe's struggle to preserve its heritage. Indian grandparents, traditionally the storytellers and cultural educators, today

feel distant from their youth, who generally have adopted modern values and do not speak the Sioux tongue.

## **145-6 Our Totem is the Raven**

*21:23 minutes, produced in 1972*

15-year-old David, an urban Indian boy, has little interest in his cultural heritage. His grandfather takes David into the forest to give him an understanding of the ways of his forefathers.

## **157 Series: Winds of Change**

*2 parts, each 57:38 minutes, produced in 1990*

This program examines the struggle to maintain Indian identity and the very existence of sovereign Indian nations within the United States.

## **240-1 Canyon Voices**

*21:43 minutes, produced in 1992*

Today's Navajo Indians who live and farm in Canyon de Chelly National Monument in Arizona, tell of the preservation of their ancient culture, relating their spiritual and ceremonial ties to the canyon.

## **539-1 Native Voices**

This program introduces Native American oral traditions through the work of three contemporary authors: Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo), Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), and Luci Tapahonso (Navajo).

## **1103-4 Appalachian Journey**

Viewers travel to the Smoky Mountains to discover how a mix of British and African-American cultures, urban influences, and contact with the Cherokee Indians resulted in the region's unique blend of ballads, legends, handmade toys, and square dancing. Appalachian culture, crafts, and traditions are highlighted.



*U.S. Census Bureau*



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## The Light That Passes By Anita Endrezze (Yaqui)

the light that passes through stones  
is the same light that reddens the apples

the light that lingers to green  
the wheat is the same that whitens  
the insides of chestnuts

the light that is the coronation  
of my hair is the same light  
that gloves your hands

the mouth that is the wolf of the North Wind  
is the same mouth that blackens  
the blossom

the mouth that is the voice  
of floods is the same that consents  
to the joining of clay and sun

the mouth that is the companion  
to sunflowers of honey is the same  
that kisses you

the eyes that see stemfuls of light  
are the same that see the matriarchs  
dancing in mountains

the eyes that see warships in skeletons  
are the same that see stars in eggshells

the eyes that see you walking in the grass  
when there's nothing but the wind  
are the same eyes that see  
distance sealing a great door



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